

REMARKS

Expeditious examination is respectfully solicited. Applicants have rewritten the specification in order to make the description of the invention more full, clear, concise, and exact in accordance with 35 U.S.C. § 112 paragraph 1. To the best of undersigned counsel's ability to discern, the specification contains no new matter.

In addition, Applicants have cancelled all preexisting claims to the elected invention and substituted new claims. It is believed that these new claims more particularly point out and more distinctly claim the subject matter of the elected invention in accordance with 35 U.S.C. § 112 paragraph 2.

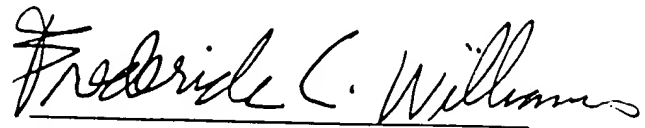
Finally, Applicants are accompanying this Preliminary Amendment with a Request to Delete Inventor for Sidney Skjei. The reason therefor is that Mr. Skjei had no inventive roll with respect to the claims for the elected invention.

Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. Should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Frederick C. Williams, Applicants' Attorney at (202) 842-0445 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted.

January 5, 2004
Date



Frederick C. Williams
Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 36969

Frederick C. Williams
Burns & Levinson LLP
1030 Fifteenth Street, N.W.
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005-1501

Tel. (202) 842-0445